SFD Dispatch Policy and Guideline Manual
Section Title: Incident Command System
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Effective: August 15, 2008
Revised: October 31, 2008

INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM

The Incident Command System (ICS) is designed to be applicable to incidents of all sizes and types. The ICS applies to small, single-unit incidents that may last for a few minutes and to complex, large scale incidents involving multiple units and agencies. All SFD responses utilize the ICS. To understand the application of the ICS, dispatchers should know the major operational position descriptions within the ICS structure.

PURPOSE OF THE INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM

The ICS provides structure and coordination to manage emergency incident operations and provide for the safety and health of fire department members and other persons involved in those activities.

PROCEDURE

The ICS will be applied to all emergency incidents, drills, exercises, and other situations that involve hazards. The first officer on the scene shall assume Command, give a scene size-up report and determine a Mode of Command. If conditions at the scene dictate, Command should be transferred to a Chief Officer (Battalion Chief or Acting Battalion Chief, Assistant Chief or Fire Chief) upon their arrival.

Tasks and assignments are originated by Command, except where Standard Task assignments have been predetermined. Command shall have the authority to modify standard task assignments or to apply them in a manner that best suits the particular incident needs. Command shall assign various supervisory and support positions as needed.

All information communications with dispatch shall be channeled through Command.

RESPONSIBILITY OF ICS

Command is responsible for managing the incident which includes, but is not limited to, the completion of the following tactical priorities:

- Remove the endangered occupants and treat the injured.
- Stabilize the incident and provide for life safety.
- Conserve property.
- Provide for the safety, accountability, and welfare of personnel. This priority is ongoing throughout the incident.

FUNCTIONS OF ICS

- Assume and announce Command and establish an effective operating position (command post).
- Specify the geographical location or street name in all radio communications. (EXAMPLE: "South Thompson Command to Springdale")
- Size-up the situation.
- Initiate, maintain, and control the communications process.
- Identify the overall strategy, develop an incident action plan, and assign companies and personnel consistent with policies and standard practice.
- Effectively organize the scene.
- Provide tactical objectives.
- Review, evaluate, and revise the action plan.
- Provide for the continuity, transfer, and termination of Command.
- Meet initial Incident Safety Officer and Staging Officer objectives or delegate them if personnel are available.

As Command is transferred, so is the responsibility for these functions.

ESTABLISHING COMMAND

The first Officer on scene shall assume Command. Command shall initiate whatever components of the ICS which are needed to effectively manage the incident scene.

Upon arrival the first arriving Officer activates the Command process by giving an initial radio report to include (excluding non-pertinent items):

- Unit designation arriving on the scene.
- Assumption of "Command".
- Description of structure or other description of incident location giving exact location of and type of emergency and any information on the area for arriving units.
- Obvious conditions (working fire, haz-mat spill, multiple patients, etc.). Anything visible showing (nothing showing / fire showing, visible plume, liquid flowing, type of vehicle(s) / container(s), etc…)
- Visible casualties.
- Brief description of action to be taken.
- Any obvious safety concerns.
- Request or release resources as required.

Once the initial radio report is complete, Command shall take the appropriate position at the scene and begin operations as indicated in one of the Modes of Command.

TRANSFER OF COMMAND

As the situation evolves, Command may transfer to the next arriving officer. Command shall not be transferred unless the next arriving officer announces assumption of Command. The initial Command officer will then give Command a status report.

SECTIONS

Sections may be assigned for separate functions of Command. These sections may be further divided as needed. Groups or Divisions will likely be assigned for specific functions such as Ventilation Group or Search and Rescue Group or for a geographical area such as Interior Division or Roof Division. Command shall determine the needed sections for each individual incident; however some sections may be pre-assigned to quickly initiate the Command structure.
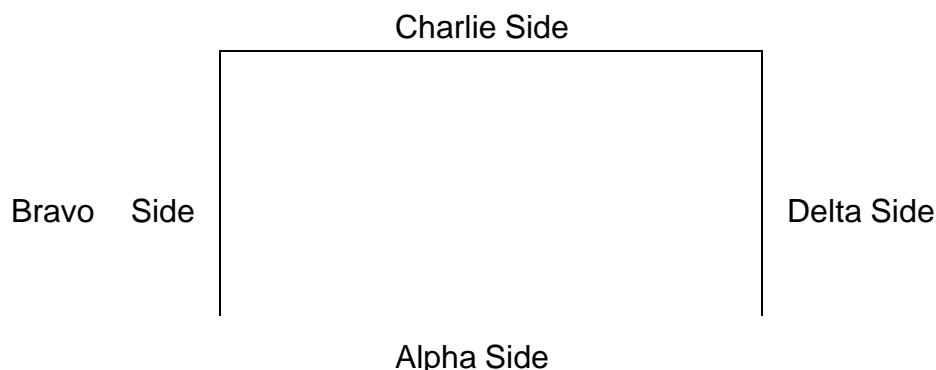
All Leaders and Supervisors shall assume responsibility and authority for activities within their span of control. This responsibility includes the safety and health of all personnel within their designated areas.

GEOGRAPHICAL IDENTIFIERS OF SCENES

In order to ensure clarity and uniformity in identifying physical or geographical locations (i.e. sides of structures, etc.) during incident operations, the Springdale Fire Department will use a letter / name designation (**A – Alpha, B – Bravo, C – Charlie, D – Delta, etc.**) for each exterior side of the fire building or incident area.

The letter / name designation begins on the street front side of the structure; the addressed side will be designated "A – Alpha". These designations are assigned clockwise around the structure or incident area. In rare incidents when structures do not have a readily identifiable street front side, the IC will designate the "A – Alpha" side. Divisions assigned based on the side of the structure or incident area will be identified as Alpha Division, Bravo Division, etc.

Example of the A, B, C, D, Designations System:

Charlie Side

Bravo   Side

Delta Side

Alpha Side

Operations at a multistory structure may require each level to be designated by floor number. If the structure has a basement, its designation will be Basement Division. The ground floor is Division 1; the second floor is Division 2, etc. Example of the Division 1, 2, 3, etc. system:

Division 4
Division 3
Division 2
Division 1
Basement Division

___Ground Level (aligned with Division 1)

POSITIONS WITHIN ICS STRUCTURE

OPERATIONS

MULTIPLE COMMANDS

During times when there are multiple incidents at different locations, each command shall be given a geographical designation for radio communications. For example, if there is an incident on Grove Street and one on Hart Street, the Grove Street incident will be designated as Grove Street Command and the Hart Street incident will be designated Hart Street Command.

REQUEST FROM COMMAND

Anytime Command makes a request, the fire dispatcher shall complete the request as soon as possible. Such requests might be contacting a utility company or business representatives. Also inform the agency or person contacted of any information that Command has relayed to you regarding the incident. Get an ETA from the person contacted and relay that information to Command. Log the time the request was made and completed in the incident's radio log.